



Illinois Department of Natural Resources

One Natural Resources Way Springfield, Illinois 62702-1271
<http://dnr.state.il.us>

Pat Quinn, Governor
Marc Miller, Director

February 2, 2010

John Plut
Strand Associates, Inc
1170 south Houbolt Rd
Joliet, IL 60431

RE: Prairie Bluff Preserve Development
IDNR Project #1002544

Dear Mr. Plut:

This letter concerns the Endangered Species Consultation for the Prairie Bluff Preserve Development located in Will County. This project was submitted for consultation in accordance with the *Illinois Endangered Species Protection Act* [520 ILCS 10/11], the *Illinois Natural Areas Preservation Act* [525 ILCS 30/17], and Title 17 *Illinois Administrative Code* Part 1075.

The development will consist of passive public recreational facilities (entrance drive, parking lot, picnic shelter, latrine, drinking fountain and shared-use trails) on the 558 acre site. The remaining area will be restored to prairie.

Protected resources in the area include Lockport Prairie Illinois Natural Areas Inventory Site, Lockport Prairie Nature Preserve, Blanding's turtle (*Emydoidea blandingii*), common moorhen (*Gallinula chloropus*), Hines emerald dragonfly (*Somatochlora hineana*), king rail (*Rallus elegans*) least bittern (*Ixobrychus exilis*) and spotted turtle (*Clemmys guttata*). The Department has completed its review of the project and determined that the action is likely to have an adverse impact on Blanding's and spotted turtles.

To minimize these impacts, the Department recommends the following measures be implemented by Strand Associates and incorporated in the Will County Forest Preserve's project authorization.

To prevent turtles from entering construction areas, exclusionary fencing should be in place by the end of March and maintained through October; daily inspections should be conducted during the construction period to ensure that exclusionary fencing is properly installed (dug into the ground) and to check if turtles are present;

Construction activities, especially near wetlands, should be limited to between September 15 and April 1. Females start basking in April and hatchlings can still be active, and traveling back to wetlands, up until October;

Routinely inspect trenches and excavations before starting work each day to assure no turtles have become trapped within them. Make sure trenches and excavated areas are covered each evening to avoid trapping any amphibians or reptiles.

Mountable, molded curbs should be incorporated instead of standard 6" vertical curbs. Mountable curbs allow turtles to move more freely to and from aquatic areas. Other species, such as frogs, toads, snakes, mammals, etc., will also benefit from mountable curbs.

Consultation on the part of the Department is completed. In accordance with 17 Ill. Adm. Code 1075.40(h), the Forest Preserve District must notify the Department of its decision regarding these recommendations, whether they will:

- Allow the action to proceed as originally proposed;
- Require the action to be modified per Department recommendations (please specify which measures if not all will be required); or
- Forgo the action.

This consultation is valid for two years unless new information becomes available that was not previously considered; the proposed action is modified; or additional species, essential habitat, or Natural Areas are identified in the vicinity. If the project has not been implemented within two years of the date of this letter, or any of the above listed conditions develop, a new consultation is necessary.

The natural resource review reflects the information existing in the Illinois Natural Heritage Database at the time of the project submittal, and should not be regarded as a final statement on the site being considered, nor should it be a substitute for detailed site surveys or field surveys required for environmental assessments. If additional protected resources are encountered during the project's implementation, you must comply with the applicable statutes and regulations. Also, note that termination does not imply IDNR's authorization or endorsement of the proposed action.

Please contact me if you have questions regarding this review.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tracy Evans".

Tracy Evans
Impact Assessment
(217) 782-7940